# THE TRAIL



RENA PARKER IL "FLO FLO" HE stage history of "The Wild

Duck" is well defined; first production, Bergen, January 9, ssi; second. Copenhagen, February 2 1885; third, Christiania, March 16, sat. first German production, Berlin, March 4, 1891; first English producon London, May 4, 1894, at the Royalty under auspices of the Independent Theatre, with W. L. Abingdon as Hislmar and Winifred Fraser as Hed-

First English production in New York, March 11, 1918, at the Plymouth, under direction of Arthur Hopkins, with Lionel Atwill as Hialmar and Mme. Nazimova as Hedvig. And there, between those para-

graphs, threads coincidence; for in the dence at the Plymouth on last Monday was W. L. Abingdon, the creator of the English Hialmar, while a scant two blocks away, at another New York theatre, was Miss Fraser!

To take up the thread and interview Mr. Abingdon upon "The Wild Duck" then and now promised to be an interesting task. In anticipation one pictured the original English Hialmar balancing every speech of Mr. Atwill's with his own interpretation of that same speech twenty-four years age. One must be quite tactful during Mr. Abingdon's opening remark.

lowever, disarmed all tact. 'Atwill's Hialmar is well nigh per- with her inimitable frank smile. "It feet-as perfect as I ever could wish was not my doing. to see or to be. This is the first time. you know, I have seen the play from the viewpoint of the audience, and it phoned me one day and suggested my was both a joy and a delight. Espetically delightful to realize that the 1 said: No. 1 am much too old for critics were of a later generation than the part!" those we had to deal with in our pro-

The Independent Theatre, being whether I could play the part now!"
uncommercial project, was at that "But Mr. Hopkins quietly insisted

The play was an inimitable an- pernumerary parts.

mor. It was as though Ibsen, glorying the pathetically serious souls who insisted upon taking him overserious fung them this farce tragedy and seeker, who may be myself, or some cans other common sensible being. If n of the two characters, go right shead and do it. If, however, you want to put aside all this worry over

#### "CHEER UP!"

Charles Dillingham's "Cheer Up!" at the Hippodrome is gay with the introduction of new attractions. Belle Story's return to the big playhouse this past week has brought a delicate bit of Easter finery into the production, for no prima donna has ever won so many admirers at the Hippodrome as has Miss Story. The exquisite costumes worn by her and the two hundred girls who assist in her two song productions are said to be tare creations. Houdini contin-ues to mystify and amuse with his two Hippodrome illusions, the Berlo Sisters and Helen Osborne enliven the aquatic spectacle with their new diving and swimming divertiesements, the military and naval features are constantly revised with additions n the transport scene, and the great Sousa-Burnside tableau "The Land of Liberty" provides a thrill which makes a visit to the oig playhouse especially memo-Although "Cheer Up!" is approaching its four hundredth presentation its popularity is greater than ever before.

how not to take myself seriously!"

TAKE IT FROM ALLA.

She Talks of Little Hedvig. Somehow the worn phrases and catchwords that have interwoven the criticisms of Mme. Nazimova in the past stale a bit when they adorn an interview nowadays. In her present role in "The Wild Duck" of Hedrig, as the dreamy, awkward child who moves, blinking, against the drab actuality of the Ekdal studio, the actress there is nothing "sinuous,"

otic" or "smoulderingly passionate."
"Why did you decide to play Hedrig?" was the first question-and the interviewer was quite aware that the question was an echo of the query of many playgoers who cannot dissociate Mme. Nazimova from Hedda Gab ler and like roles and accept willingly so unique a character in repertoire as little Hedvig.

The answer to the question, as it



RUTH THOMPSON

has been to many innovations on the the interview, therefore, and avoid all metropolitan stage within the last few years, was "Arthur Hopkins." "Suppose I tell you the way I came to play Hedvig," said Mme. Nazimova

"Not yours at all?"

Not one tiny bit. Mr. Hopkins tele-

"He said: 'I believe you can do They were all there, our first Hedrig, say what you will.' tight—all the Perfect Ibsenites, all "Mr. Hopkins," I said, very firmly, the imperfect Philistines, and the 'No. I was asked to play Hedvio ten Tities-Archer, Wilde, George Moore, years ago, and at that time I said no, Shaw, Scott-and the rest, who came that I was too old to impersonate a repared to protest or to praise, ac- fourteen-year-old child. Now, if ten centing to their own lights on Ibsen. years ago I thought that, judge, then,

me a very suitable sponsor for The that he believed in my ability until at Wild Duck.' In spite of all the roar-last he shook my determination, Finally ag farcical humor of buttery Hialmar, I said (this was all over the telephone the play has never heretofore been you know): I shall be willing to con-13 lack of an emotional role for a forget that you have ever seen me on leading lady. So our English act the stage—that you have ever heard nue who is reminded of her big boy in all the small parts for which they tresses, many of whom were railroad—anything about me at all—and let me the officers' training camp by the little have been engaged, made a point of ed into fame by Hedda or Nora or in turn forget that I have ever acted.

Andy of the stage.

Eliua, have one and all passed both Let me go back to the time when I was

This is the play fina and Hedrig by, and influenced graduated from school and first went the production of the other plays by on the stage; and let me read the play This is the play half of us would not Broadway choruses. then which contain more exploitable to you exactly as though I were a beroles. The Independent Theatre, how- ginner. Put me under the same con- work is different, we too are different. ever, under the leadership of Mr. ditions that you would a young ama- He is en rapport with his times; he reason why a chorus, in order to be Grein was in a position to produce star teur coming unknown to your office. is, moreover, like the writer of folk- popular, should first have to go out plays or not, as it wished, and so came and do not let anything influence you songs; he sings us; he does not sing individually and get themselves mention first English production of 'The except the same opinion you might himself.' form of the veriest applicant for su-

"Mr. Hopkins agreed. I met him, sacr to the Perfect Ibsenites, and a began reading the play to him, and at I've no desire to imprint my peculiarienough.' Then he overrode all my obelse could I do except justify his belief? Here is Gregers, the truth And that is the true story of how I less he cares about that. He designs pretty and be all vivaciousness all the

### MR. SMITH'S WORK.

dent recently while in the service of self."
the Red Cross, is from the pen of There is, however, incidental though tragic end:

of types so varied as "Tee Little sentimentality. Teacher," and "A Tailor-Made Man" There is no c and "Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh" should it be George Cohan himself who unbe the work of one playwright. Versa- derstands so well what we Americans tility, in the ordinary sense of the laugh at. He has written plays that word, does not account for it; but have not met with success, but I there is a twofold answer to the riddle: doubt if he has ever written a "laugh" Harry James Smith could not have that has not carried across. Even written "Mrs. Bumpstead-Leigh" in when more experienced heads than his this year or so, and were that play own have been doubtfully shaken produced now for the first time we over certain comedy lines before the would not love it as we did then, seven play's production, when the first night years ago this spring. It is something came the laugh came, too, at the right the war has done to us, wiping out for moment, spontaneous, hearty and us all sorts of secondary values. Old American. We know how to laugh, interests, that seemed solid and perma- and laughter is our way of handling nent enough in their day, have broken social counterfeits — snobs, social to pieces amid the wreckage of these climbers and pretenders. chaotic times: social satires, psycho- American, that is what Mrs. Bumppathology, women who think they are stead-Leigh is, as well as the great not happy with their husbands. "Who actress who played it and the play-

about us we are left clinging, like ship-wrecked mariners, to a few stout spars feet eating a hunk of apple pie before

to eat at Childs now.'

performance of "The Little Teacher." This is all very well, as far as it so have we sought for this result than on both sides of the footlights. I have goes, but "exquisite sanity" does not in the personnel of our company of make us laugh and cry at once and not heard one person say that it is a make us laugh and cry at once and pity that the charming little school forget the coal famine and the players. eacher should marry beneath her. On plumber's bill. the contrary, we all rejoice when Pug comes back. Kindness and strength heart in us to have a fresh try at life and honesty and loyalty are the things when things have been going as wrong Rut His Audience Cannot Always we care for to-day, not polish and edu- as could be. "Exqui ite sanity" dies not cation and birth. And one man in cover the whole ground of "A Tailor-khaki is as good as the next. Then Made Man." There is in that play phikhaki is as good as the next. Then Made Mail.

there are those two youngsters whom loophy that puts the starch back in:0 himself to be utterly unconscious of the lore takes home with her our spinal columns, and it is a philosthe little teacher takes home with her our spinel columns, and it is a philosto the farmhouse where she boards, ophy that we Americans can underbecause they are badly treated at home. stand and accept as another people it doesn't really matter to the audience could not. For don't we know how ofwhether they be the children of the fice boys can become great railroad Sicilian woman or not. If the play-magnates and little country school wright chose to confront us with a girls great ladies? Haven't miracles is his affair and not ours. Our af- occurrence in this country of ours? fair is that they are little children and so are entitled to the rights of all chil- though not a matinee fairy tale of dren everywhere: shelter, kindness, love. Belgium and France has pressed for children with mothers and nurses that home to us. All the spectators are but of tailors and shipbuilders, for the



LOUISE ALLEN

woman from somewhere on Park ave-

could not have written ten years ago.

the end of the first act he said, 'That's ties, my personal whim or taste, my vinced us it was why should the separate self on my work. I can't feel jections with his belief in me that I things that way. A master architect to admit that they need be. We were was capable of acting Hedvig. What doesn't spread his name all over his unwilling to believe that girls who prize building. The bigger he is the were expected to sing, dance, look ther matter of fact scandalmonger:

The same to play in "The Wild Duck."

Some day the amateur interviewer is reward."

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The same to play in "The Wild Duck."

The same to pla glaziers. So must a playwright. The part, I believe entitles them to being A Tribute From an Admirer and

Associate in War Work.

The following tribute to the star and the management if you hope to put the thing across. A suc-The following tribute to the late cess is a triumph of cooperation and Harry James Smith, the playwright, the author ought to be very humble who was killed in an automobile acci- about it-proud of them, not of him-

Evelyn Gill Klahr, who had been as- it may be, a highly individual and unsociated with Mr. Smith in his work mistakable flavor about Mr. Smith's since the war began. The SUN appre- comedy. It is the "laughs" of the clates the opportunity to pay a tribute play, to borrow the vernacular of the to the talents of the playwright whose footlights, which mark the work as career has come to such a sudden and the playwright's own, give the unique flavor and the effervescence and keep It seems almost incredible that plays the sentiment from slopping over into

There is no other playwright, unless

has time or heart," said Harry James wright who wrote it. You feel that

cally slapstick farce, here you are! bother with that sort of thing nowa-flat or on a Montana ranch. Mrs. At least I am proving that I know days, when mothers are saying good- Fiske, in speaking of Mrs. Bumpstcodby to sons, and the best of our race Leigh's picture of life in Missionary lie wounded and dying?" With the Loop said: "I never saw a base burner universe apparently disintegrating in my life, but whatever it is I know

> These few fundamental things that (which, according to him, is the same are left us are to be found in "The thing as saying he was having the Little Teacher"—these and democracy, blues), Harry James Smith said that in attractions in New York last sea-A great wave of democracy has there was one phrase that seemed to swept over us. The son of the banker him to characterize his work with its practically every magazine cover in is in camp saluting the son of his best and its worst, and that phrase grocer as superior officer. The na- was "exquisite sanity"; a comment of tion's host of idle women has disap-lively interest, it seems to me, because peared overnight, and the word "so-clety woman" has acquired a quaint, yet not in the least illuminating. It is obselete sound. There is in the air a true to this extent, that his work is recruiting our company. The young new fever for work and for service, and always the work of a master craftsthe new class of workers, which used man, the texture being perfectly able to be the leisure class, now is happy to to stand microscopic inspection. The lunch at the most humble of places, if plot too and its characters and their they cannot be and at the same time that means getting back to work more motives all hear examination. Everyquickly, brushing elbows at cafeterias thing is sound and reasonable and ra-

the narratives of morbid passions and And the spirit of this is at every hectic loves, performance of "The Little Teacher," This is all very well, as far as it

"Exquisite sanity" does not put ovely real mother in the last act that like that always been a matter of daily

"A Tailor Made Man" is a fairy tale. spangled fairies and talking animals in the fight for those children-the adults of a country that hasn't grown in the fight for those children—the adults of a country that hasn't grown tirely wrong—it is a relic of the old study of the character he is playing, drygoods man from Kansas City, who up yet and refuses to grow up because days of acting, when an actor, to be He must not be content with mere has never had any children, and the it prefers everlasting youth and everlasting enthusiasm.

This is the play that is supposed to play of "The Well Fitting Dress Suit." There is a tailor's assistant and a borrowed dress suit in each play, and there the similarity ends. With the most zealous or the most eccentric classification one could not possibly put the two plays into the same category, the one a nasty play of illicit loves and intrigues, the other a clean and merry tale of a little tailor One wondered what Mr. Smith would

write next, when he would be able to take the time from patriotic duties connected with the Red Cross.

"I'd like to do a war play if they'd let me," he confessed. "But not a regulation war play. Something quite On March 16, while in the Northwest

on a mission for the Red Cross, Harry James Smith, playwright and patriot lost his life.

A SELWYN NOVELTY.

it Will Be Found in "Rock-a-Bre Baby."

"Rock-a-Bye Baby," the new musical play which Selwyn & Co. are to present, is a play with music that is different." Not only does "Rock-a-Bye Haby" have a real story to tell, but a company of real actors has been enmaged to tell it.

In another respect, too, it is "differ-It has long been the contention of the Selwyns that if they ever did a musical play -"Rock-a-Fye Baby" is their first -they would strive for something that would be different in every ! respect from the usual or average musical comedy. This statement even included the chorus. "Rock-a-Bye Baby," strictly speak-

ing, has no chorus. True, it has scores of girls as beautiful as could be found, but they are more than mere beauties. They can sing-Jerome Kern, who wrote the music, in-sisted on that. They can act Edgar Allen Woolf, who wrote the book with Andy of the stage. that. And they are famed for the This is the play Harry James Smith usual things which are usually made much of in extolling the merits of

Selwyn, "there was not the slightest tioned as corespondents or possess "If I have a claim to any distinctive reputations of any unpleasant nature "If a chorus was essential to the place as a writer," he said in dis-cussing the matter, "it's right here, success of a musical play—and we chorus be any different? We refused



ANN AUSTIN IT

schools. Several others will make their first stage appearance in 'Rockready had small parts in other pro

"Fortunately-though, mind you, I do not think it an absolute essential-they are without doubt among the most attractive girls I have ever seen on the stage. In their number there are several who won international reputations for their beauty. Not to mention names here for fear for safety—kindness andiduty and love going to bed."

One day, in a self-analytical mood of door injustice to others not mentioned, I might say that there are at least half a dozen girls who were seen existence

"The point I ayn trying to make, however, is that we did not feel that women of 'Rock-a-Bye Baby' ladies, every one of them, and so far be just as attractive and lively as any

"We hope that the public will feel and automats with the life long toiler. tional. His plays are vehicles for no Said one young thing, "It is very chic fervid propaganda. His stories are not not only given them something worth not only given them something worth while, but something that is decidedly different. And in nothing any more

#### HODGE FORGETS.

Do the Same.

"The most successful actor of the the stage," said William Hodge of "A Cure for Curables," Mr. Hodge had been discussing the

actor of the old school as compared with the modern follower of the docthe star is an enthusiastic advocate.

AMUSEMENTS.



Zitelka Dolores in "See You Later," musical version of Paul trine of naturalism in acting, of which Potter's "The Girl From Rector's."

"So many actors still cling to the be- away with all this, and the actor of lief that in order to give a successful the present day does not 'feel out' his performance," continued Mr. Hodge, audience; instead, he feels out his they must feel out their audience and character. To be successful he must study its need, watching the effect of forget the people out front. He must every gesture and speech. This is en- devote his entire attention to a close successful, had to exaggerate in a memorizing of the lines or the regulamost unnatural 'theatrical' manner, tion gestures and stage business that ranting and shouting all over the stage go with his part. He must go deeper sed" on the Hungarian like a spellbinder at a political meet- into it-study the character itself, striving always to learn all of its lit-"The development of naturalism did the characteristics and peculiarities.

AMUSEMENTS

div he advances in his chosen profesis able to make with his character af- on their next bill, appearing as Salome ter he becomes acquainted with it. in the play of that name by Oscar When the actor begins to feel out his Wilds, was kind enough to rearrange audience the audience begins to 'feel her schedule in view of the great popout' the actor, and," shrugging his ularity of the Shaw play, shoulders, "you know the sad result." miere of the new bill therefore will Mr. Hodge is one of the few in the be on Monday, April 8.

new school of actors. He contends that to play to an audience is erroneous. The actor, he says, should play at it, forgetting its very existence, and of the Society of American Magicians. obliviousness to it he will be able to play his very best.

Theatre has been sold out for every show largely will consist of magic acts performance of "Mrs. Warren's Pro-contributed by the members of the fession," in which Mary Shaw is ap-Society of American Magicians who



CHU CHIN CHOW

AMUSEMENTS.

"It will surprise him to see how rap- Players, the run of the play has been extended for two weeks. Mmc. Yoraka. ion, and how many improvements he who is to be the guest of the Players

For the benefit of the hospital fund of which Harry Houdini is the president, and of the Showmen's League of America a benefit will be given at the Hippodrome on the evening of Sunday. Owing to the fact that the Comedy April 21. According to the plans the pearing with the Washington Square totally are unknown to the public.

The people at large know such magiclans as Houdini, Kellar, Herrmann, &c., but they do not know the bankers, engineers, the prominent physicians and men in other walks of life with whom magic is a hobby and who appear only on these special events of the Society of American Magicians. A number of these amateurs in magic have in their homes completely equipped theatres in which they give private performances only, and all of them have volunteered their services for the Hippodrome affair on April 21. There doubtless will be many incredulous expressions of surprise when Mr. Houdini announces his complete programme for the evaning, as it will include men who never were known as wonder workers save in the lines of big business

The Shakespeare Playhouse announces that Walter Hampden will appear in the title role of "Macbeth" in the forthcoming production to be given at the Cort Theatre for two spe-cial matinees, Friday afternoon, April and Saturday morning, April 6. Mr. Hampden's Antony was one of the most attractive features of the all star cast of "Julius Casar" presented by the Shakespeare Playhouse for four matinees ending yesterday; and his Caliban in "The Tempest," given at the Century Theatre a year ago, is also recalled. These are the only Shakespearcan roles in which he has appeared in America, although he is one of the best known Shakespearian players of the London stage. His Manson in "The Servant in the House," the famous original cast, in which he played throughout the United States, is the most notable role in which he has been seen in this coun-

AMUSEMENTS.

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enry Miller's Theatre, Forty-third Street, East of Broadway, will open Easter Monday with Henry Miller's Theatre Company presenting "The Fountain of Youth," a comedy by Louis Evan Shipman. The cast includes: Henry Miller, Olive Tell, Lucile Watson, Hilda Spong, Frank Kemble Cooper, Lillian Cooper, Frank Sylvester, C. Leslie Austen, Robert Ames, Lewis Scalev.

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